

In the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for conditioning a surface of a polishing pad after chemical-mechanical polishing of a semiconductor substrate with the pad surface, the pad not being a semiconductor substrate, the method comprising exposing the pad surface to cleaning material that is entirely in the vapor phase, the cleaning material comprising steam.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the cleaning material is jetted onto the pad surface to impact the surface with a pressure of from about 10 psig to about 20 psig.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the cleaning material has a temperature of at least about 200°F as it impacts the surface.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the cleaning material is jetted onto the pad surface from a head which is displaced relative to the pad surface during the exposure of the pad surface to the cleaning material.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad has a contaminant associated therewith prior to the conditioning, and wherein a chemical agent suitable for reacting with the contaminant is within the cleaning material during the exposure of the pad surface to the cleaning material.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method of claim 5 wherein the chemical agent includes ammonium.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The method of claim 6 wherein the chemical agent is ammonium citrate.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method of claim 6 wherein the chemical-mechanical polishing utilizes the pad to polish a copper-containing material.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad is rubbed against a conditioning stone during the exposure to the cleaning material.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad is rubbed against a conditioning stone prior to the exposure to the cleaning material.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad is rubbed against a conditioning stone after the exposure to the cleaning material.

Claims 12-35 (canceled).